

Afebrile

absence of a fever

Apical pulse

a central pulse located
at the apex of the heart

Apical-radial pulse

measurement of the
apical beat and the
radial pulse at the same
time

Apnea

a complete absence of
respirations

Arrhythmia

a pulse with an
abnormal rhythm

Arterial blood pressure	the measure of the pressure exerted by the blood as it pulsates through the arteries
Arteriosclerosis	a condition in which the elastic and muscular tissues of the arteries are replaced with fibrous tissue
Auscultatory gap	the temporary disappearance of sounds normally heard over the brachial artery when the sphygmomanometer cuff pressure is high and the sounds reappear at a lower level
Basal metabolic rate	(BMR) the rate of energy utilization in the body required to maintain essential activities such as breathing
Body temperature	the balance between the heat produced by the body and the heat lost from the body

Bradycardia

abnormally slow pulse rate, less than 60 per minute

Bradypnea

abnormally slow respiratory rate, usually less than 10 respirations per minute

Cardinal signs

see Vital signs

Chemical thermogenesis

the stimulation of heat production in the body through increased cellular metabolism caused by increases in thyroxine output

Conduction

the transfer of heat from one molecule to another in direct contact

Constant fever	a state in which the body temperature fluctuates minimally but always remains above normal
Convection	the dispersion of heat by air currents
Core temperature	the temperature of the deep tissues of the body (e.g., thorax, abdominal cavity); relatively constant at 37°C (98.6°F)
Costal (thoracic) breathing	use of the external intercostal muscles and other accessory muscles, such as the sternocleidomastoid muscles
Diaphragmatic (abdominal) breathing	contraction and relaxation of the diaphragm, observed by the movement of the abdomen, which occurs as a result of the diaphragm's contraction and downward movement

Diastolic pressure	the pressure of the blood against the arterial walls when the ventricles of the heart are at rest
Dysrhythmia	a pulse with an irregular rhythm
Elasticity of the arterial wall	pliability or expansibility of the vessels
Eupnea	normal, quiet breathing
Exhalation	(expiration) the movement of gases from the lungs to the atmosphere

Expiration

See Exhalation

External respiration

the interchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between the alveoli of the lungs and the pulmonary blood

Febrile

pertaining to a fever;
feverish

Fever

elevated body
temperature

Fever spike

a temperature that rises to fever level rapidly following a normal temperature and then returns to normal within a few hours

Heat balance	the state a person is in when the amount of heat produced by the body exactly equals the amount of heat lost
Hematocrit	the proportion of red blood cells (erythrocytes) to the total blood volume
Hyperpyrexia	see Hyperthermia
Hypertension	an abnormally high blood pressure; over 140 mm Hg systolic and/or 90 mm Hg diastolic
Hyperthermia	an extremely high body temperature (e.g., 41 degrees C [105.8 degrees F])

Hyperventilation

very deep, rapid
respirations

Hypotension

an abnormally low blood
pressure; less than 100
mm Hg systolic in an
adult

Hypothalamic
integrator

the center in the brain that
controls the core
temperature; located in the
preoptic area of the
hypothalamus

Hypoventilation

very shallow
respirations

Inhalation

the act of breathing in;
the intake of air or other
substances into the
lungs

Insensible water loss

continuous and
unnoticed water loss

Inspiration

See Inhalation

Intermittent fever

a body temperature that
alternates at regular intervals
between periods of fever and
periods of normal or
subnormal temperatures

Internal respiration

the interchange of oxygen
and carbon dioxide between
the circulating blood and the
cells of the body tissues

Korotkoff's sounds

a series of five sounds
produced by blood within
the artery with each
ventricular contraction

Meniscus

the crescent-shaped
upper surface of a
column of fluid

Orthostatic
hypotension

decrease in blood pressure
related to positional or
postural changes from lying to
sitting or standing positions

Peripheral pulse

a pulse located in the
periphery of the body
(eg, foot, wrist)

Point of maximal
impulse

(PMI) the point where
the apex of the heart
touches the anterior
chest wall

Polypnea

abnormally fast
respirations

Pulse	the wave of blood within an artery that is created by contraction of the left ventricle of the heart
Pulse deficit	the difference between the apical pulse and the radial pulse
Pulse oximeter	a noninvasive device that measures the arterial blood oxygen saturation by means of a sensor attached to the finger
Pulse pressure	the difference between the systolic and the diastolic blood pressure
Pulse rhythm	the pattern of the beats and intervals between the beats

Pulse volume

the strength or amplitude of the pulse, the force of blood exerted with each heart beat

Pyrexia

a body temperature above the normal range, fever

Radiation

the transfer of heat from the surface of one object to the surface of another without contact between the two objects

Relapsing fever

the occurrence short febrile periods of a few days interspersed with periods of 1 or 2 days of normal temperature

Remittent fever

the occurrence of a wide range of temperature fluctuations (more than 2 degrees C [3.6 degrees F]) over the 24-hour period, all of which are above normal

Respiration

the act of breathing; transport of oxygen from the atmosphere to the body cells and transport of carbon dioxide from the cells to the atmosphere

Respiratory character

see Respiratory quality

Respiratory quality

refers to those aspects of breathing that are different from normal, effortless breathing, includes the amount of effort exerted to breathe and the sounds produced by breathing

Respiratory rhythm

refers to the regularity of the expirations and the inspirations

Surface temperature

the temperature of the skin, the subcutaneous

Systolic pressure	the pressure of the blood against the arterial walls when the ventricles of the heart contract
Tachycardia	an abnormally rapid pulse rate, greater than 100 beats per minute
Tachypnea	abnormally fast respirations, usually more than 24 respirations per minute
Tidal volume	the volume of air that is normally inhaled and exhaled
Vaporization	continuous evaporation of moisture from the respiratory tract and from the mucosa of the mouth and from the skin

Ventilation

the movement of air in and out of the lungs; the process of inhalation and exhalation

Viscous

thick, sticky

Vital signs

measurements of physiological functioning, specifically body temperature, pulse, respirations, and blood pressure; may include pain and pulse oximetry